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Reply to Non-Compliant Amendment of July 26, 2004

CLAIMS

CLAIM 1 – 42 (CANCELED)

CLAIM 43. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical apparatus, comprising:

a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft; a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft and having a capture ledge; and an interchangeable surgical tool attachable to the coupler and including an anchor adapted to cooperate with and mate to the capture ledge.

CLAIM 44. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the capture ledge is further formed in the coupler to define at least one lateral slot recess adapted to cooperate with and receive the anchor and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 45. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 44, wherein the anchor is formed as a generally hook shaped tine having an end sized for receipt into the slot recess and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 46. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the anchor is formed with at least one generally hook shaped tine, formed with a frangible portion, that includes an engagement face adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably engage the capture ledge, and the tine to capture ledge engagement is capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

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CLAIM 47. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the anchor is formed with a frangible portion designed to break in an orientation substantially orthogonal to a direction of translation of the prime mover.

CLAIM 48. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 46, wherein the frangible portion is substantially sealed from an exterior environment by the coupler and the manipulation shaft.

CLAIM 49. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 44, wherein the anchor is formed with a frangible portion adapted to cooperate with and be removably received in the slet recess after the frangible portion of the anchor has been severed.

CLAIM 50. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical apparatus, comprising:
a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;
a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft having a capture ledge that defines a slet recess in the coupler; and
an interchangeable surgical tool adapted to cooperate with and connect to the coupler comprising a frangible portion and an anchor adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably mate to the capture ledge and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool, the frangible portion being adapted for receipt in the slet recess after the anchor has been removed from the tool.

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CLAIM 51. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical apparatus, comprising:

- a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;
- a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft having a capture ledge that defines a lateral slot recess in the coupler; and
- an interchangeable surgical tool for attachment to the coupler and formed with an anchor having a shear notch, the anchor being adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably mate to the capture ledge and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool, and to be severed from the tool about the notch.

CLAIM 52. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical apparatus, comprising:

- a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;
- a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft and incorporating an anchor; and
- an interchangeable surgical tool adapted to cooperate with and connect to the coupler and formed with a capture ledge adapted to cooperate with and mate to the anchor and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 53. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 52, wherein the capture ledge is further formed in the tool to define at least one lateral slot recess adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably receive the anchor.

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CLAIM 54. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 53, wherein the anchor is formed as a generally hook shaped tine having an end sized for non-releasable receipt into the slot recess.

CLAIM 55. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 52, wherein the anchor is formed with at least one generally hook shaped tine that includes an engagement face adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably engage the capture ledge.

CLAIM 56. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical apparatus, comprising:
a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;
a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft to have a generally hook shaped anchor having an engagement face; and
an interchangeable surgical tool formed at an end with a capture ledge that defines a lateral slot recess in the tool, the ledge being adapted to cooperate with and mate to the engagement face and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 57. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical apparatus, comprising:
a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;
a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft and formed with an anchor; and

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an interchangeable surgical tool configured to connect to the coupler and formed with a reciprocating capture member adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably mate to the anchor and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 58. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 57, wherein the capture member is further formed in the tool to define at least one lateral recess adapted to cooperate with and receive the anchor.

CLAIM 59. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 58, wherein the anchor is formed as a generally hook shaped tine having an end sized for receipt into the recess.

CLAIM 60. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 57, wherein the anchor is formed with at least one generally hook shaped tine that includes an engagement face adapted to cooperate with and engage the capture ledge.

CLAIM 61. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical tool, comprising:

a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;

a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft and including a receiver having an engagement ledge and shelf; and

an interchangeable surgical tool attachable to the coupler that includes an engager adapted to cooperate with and mate to the receiver.

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CLAIM 62. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 61, wherein the receiver further defines a generally hook shaped recess adapted to cooperate with and mate to the engager and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 63. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 61, wherein the engager is further formed with a generally hook shaped projection adapted to cooperate with and mate to the receiver and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 64. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 61, wherein the engager is formed with a frangible portion designed to break in an orientation substantially orthogonal to the direction of translation of the prime mover.

CLAIM 65. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 64, wherein the frangible portion is sealed from an exterior environment by the coupler and the manipulation shaft.

CLAIM 66. (Currently Amended) A reconfigurable surgical tool, comprising:
a surgical instrument assembly formed with a hollow manipulation shaft internally receiving a prime mover activated by an actuator located at a proximal end of the shaft;
a coupler formed about a distal end of the shaft and formed with an engager; and
an interchangeable surgical tool formed with a receiver formed with an engagement ledge and shelf and adapted to cooperate with mate to the engager.

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CLAIM 67. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 66, wherein the receiver is further formed to define a generally hook shaped recess sized to non-releasably receive the engager and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 68. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 66, wherein the engager further incorporates a generally hook shaped projection adapted for non-releasable receipt in the recess to releasably mate to the receiver and capable of transferring rotational force from the prime mover to the tool.

CLAIM 69. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 66, wherein the engager is formed with a frangible portion designed to break in an orientation substantially orthogonal to the direction of translation of the prime mover.

CLAIM 70. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 69, wherein the frangible portion is sealed from an exterior environment by the coupler and the manipulation shaft.

CLAIM 71. (Previously Presented) A means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure, comprising:

a means for imparting a range of motion;
a means for defining an intracorporeal passageway connected at a proximal end to the motion imparting means, the passageway being internally received with a means for transmitting the imparted range of motion;

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a means for distally coupling the passageway means that defines a means for interchangeably capturing;
an interchangeable means for performing a surgical intervention that includes a means for mating the intervention means to the capturing means; and
wherein the interchangeable intervention means is, when mated to the capturing means, remotely actuatable by operation of the motion imparting means.

CLAIM 72. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 71, wherein the capturing means is further formed in the coupling means to define at least means for defining a lateral slot recess adapted to cooperate with and receive the mating means and capable of transmitting rotational force between the motion imparting means and the interchangeable intervention means.

CLAIM 73. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 72, wherein the mating means is formed as a generally hook shaped tine having an end sized for receipt into the slot recess and capable of transmitting rotational force between the motion imparting means and the interchangeable intervention means.

CLAIM 74. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 71, wherein the mating means is formed with at least one generally hook shaped tine that includes an engagement face adapted to cooperate with and engage the

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means for capturing and the mating means is capable of transmitting rotational force between the motion imparting means and the interchangeable intervention means.

CLAIM 75. (Previously Presented) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 71, wherein the means for mating is further formed with a means for defining a frangible portion of the mating means designed to break in an orientation substantially orthogonal to a direction of translation of the motion imparting means.

CLAIM 76. (Previously Presented) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 75, wherein the frangible portion defining means is further formed with a means to define a reduced cross section of the mating means and the frangible portion defining means is substantially sealed from an exterior environment by the passageway means and the coupling means.

CLAIM 77. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 72, wherein the mating means is formed with a frangible portion defining means adapted to cooperate with and be removably received in the slot recess after the frangible portion defining means has been severed.

CLAIM 78. (Previously Presented) A means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure, comprising:

a means for imparting a range of motion;

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a means for defining an intracorporeal passageway connected at a proximal end to the motion imparting means, the passageway being internally received with a means for transmitting the imparted range of motion;

a means for distally coupling the passageway means that defines a means for anchoring; an interchangeable means for performing a surgical intervention that includes a means for capturing the anchoring means; and

wherein the interchangeable intervention means is, when mated to the anchoring means, remotely actuatable by operation of the motion imparting means and capable of transmitting rotational force between the motion imparting means and the interchangeable intervention means.

CLAIM 79. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 78, wherein the capturing means is further formed in the intervention means to define at least one means for defining a lateral slot recess adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably receive the anchoring means.

CLAIM 80. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 79, wherein the anchoring means is formed as a generally hook shaped tine having an end sized for non-releasable receipt into the slot recess.

CLAIM 81. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 78, wherein the anchoring means is formed with at least one

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generally hook shaped tine that includes an engagement face adapted to cooperate with and non-releasably engage the means for capturing.

CLAIM 82. (Previously Presented) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 78, wherein the means for anchoring is further formed with a means for defining a frangible portion of the anchoring means designed to break in an orientation substantially orthogonal to a direction of translation of the motion imparting means.

CLAIM 83. (Previously Presented) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 82, wherein the frangible portion defining means is further formed with a means to define a reduced cross section of the anchoring means and the frangible portion defining means is substantially sealed from an exterior environment by the passageway means and the coupling means.

CLAIM 84. (Currently Amended) The means for performing an intracorporeal surgical procedure according to claim 79, wherein the anchoring means is formed with a frangible portion defining means adapted to cooperate with and be removably received in the slot recess after the frangible portion defining means has been severed.

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Conclusion

It is the Applicants' position that the claims are in a condition for allowance. Allowance of the claims is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions or concerns prior to passing this case onto allowance, he is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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